

## Article - Public Utilities

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§7-714. IN EFFECT

// EFFECTIVE UNTIL JUNE 30, 2023 PER CHAPTER 757 OF 2019 //

(a) The Power Plant Research Program shall conduct a study of the renewable energy portfolio standard and related matters in accordance with this section.

(b) The study shall be a comprehensive review of the history, implementation, overall costs and benefits, and effectiveness of the renewable energy portfolio standard in relation to the energy policies of the State, including:

(1) the availability of all clean energy sources at reasonable and affordable rates, including in-State and out-of-state renewable energy options;

(2) the economic and environmental impacts of the deployment of renewable energy sources in the State and in surrounding areas of the PJM region;

(3) the effectiveness of the standard in encouraging development and deployment of renewable energy sources;

(4) the impact of alterations that have been made in the components of each tier of the standard, the implementation of different specific goals for particular sources, and the effect of different percentages and alternative compliance payment scales for energy in the tiers;

(5) an assessment of alternative models of regulation and market-based tools that may be available or advisable to promote the goals of the standard and the energy policies of the State; and

(6) the potential to alter or otherwise evolve the standard in order to increase and maintain its effectiveness in promoting the State's energy policies.

(c) Particular subjects to be addressed in the study include:

(1) the role and effectiveness that the standard may have in reducing the carbon content of imported electricity and whether existing or new additional complementary policies or programs could help address the carbon emissions associated with electricity imported into the State;

(2) the net environmental and fiscal impacts that may be associated with long-term contracts tied to clean energy projects, including:

(i) ratepayer impacts that resulted in other states from the use of long-term contracts for the procurement of renewable energy for the other states' standard offer service and whether the use of long-term contracts incentivized new renewable energy generation development; and

(ii) ratepayer impacts that may result in the State from the use of long-term contracts for each energy source in the State's Tier 1 and whether, for each of the sources, the use of long-term contracts would incentivize new renewable energy generation development in that source;

(3) whether the standard is able to meet current and potential future targets without the inclusion of certain technologies;

(4) what industries are projected to grow, and to what extent, as a result of incentives associated with the standard;

(5) whether the public health and environmental benefits of the growing clean energy industries supported by the standard are being equitably distributed across overburdened and underserved environmental justice communities;

(6) whether the State is likely to meet its existing goals under the standard and, if the State were to increase those goals, whether electricity suppliers should expect to find an adequate supply to meet the additional demand for credits;

(7) additional opportunities that may be available to promote local job creation within the industries that are projected to grow as a result of the standard;

(8) system flexibility that the State would need under future goals under the standard, including the quantities of system peaking and ramping that may be required;

(9) how energy storage technology and other flexibility resources should continue to be addressed in support of renewable energy and State energy policy, including:

(i) whether the resources should be encouraged through a procurement, a production, or an installation incentive;

(ii) the advisability of providing incentives for energy storage devices to increase hosting capacity of increased renewable on-site generation on the distribution system; and

(iii) discussion of the costs and benefits of energy storage deployment in the State under future goals scenarios for renewable generation;

(10) (i) the role of in-State clean energy in achieving greenhouse gas emission reductions and promoting local jobs and economic activity in the State;

(ii) the impact of item (i) of this item on ratepayers with respect to the requirement of in-State clean energy generation as an increasing percentage of the standard; and

(iii) the impact of all energy sources that qualify under the standard with respect to the requirement of in-State clean energy generation as an increasing percentage of the standard;

(11) an assessment of any change in solar renewable energy credit prices over the immediate 24 months preceding the submission of the interim report required under subsection (e) of this section;

(12) an assessment of the costs, benefits, and any legal or other implications of allowing the location anywhere in or off the coast of the contiguous United States of Tier 1 renewable sources that are currently required to be located in the PJM region or in a control area that is adjacent to the PJM region, if the electricity is delivered into the PJM region; and

(13) any other matters the Program considers relevant to the analysis of the issues outlined in this section.

(d) (1) The Commission, the Administration, the Department of the Environment, the Department of Natural Resources, and other State and local units shall cooperate with the Program in the conduct of the study under this section, including sharing of information, data, and resources, subject to appropriate legal protection of commercially sensitive and other information.

(2) The Program shall consult with representatives of various segments of the clean energy industry and other stakeholders.

(e) (1) (i) On or before December 1, 2018, the Program shall submit an interim report on any preliminary findings of the study under this section, including any observations and requests for alteration or clarification of the scope,

subjects, procedures, and intergovernmental cooperation that may be required to complete the study and submit a final report under this subsection.

(ii) If the Program determines that any preliminary findings under subparagraph (i) of this paragraph warrant reporting earlier than December 1, 2018, the Program may submit a preliminary interim report on those preliminary findings.

(2) On or before December 1, 2019, the Program shall submit a final report on the findings of the study, including proposals for any alteration of the renewable portfolio standard, alternative mechanisms for furthering the State's energy policies, and related matters, and any proposed legislative or regulatory changes recommended to implement the findings of the study.

(3) The interim, any preliminary interim, and final reports shall be submitted to the Governor and, subject to § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the Senate Finance Committee and the House Economic Matters Committee.

(f) (1) The Program shall conduct a supplemental study to assess the overall costs and benefits of increasing the renewable energy portfolio standard to a goal of 100% renewable energy by 2040.

(2) Particular subjects to be addressed in the supplemental study shall include:

(i) all relevant subjects listed in subsections (b) and (c) of this section;

(ii) an assessment of whether any in-State industries could be displaced or negatively economically impacted by a 100% renewable energy portfolio standard, and recommendations on how to provide and fund a comparable transition for workers, including wage and benefit packages, and communities that rely on those industries that could face displacement or be negatively economically impacted; and

(iii) the findings and recommendations of the study of nuclear energy and its role as a renewable or clean energy resource conducted by the Program under Chapter 757, § 2 of the Acts of the General Assembly of 2019.

(3) On completion of the supplemental study, the Program shall use the findings of the study to publish recommendations regarding the feasibility of implementing a renewable energy portfolio standard of 100% by 2040.

(4) On or before January 1, 2024, the Program shall submit the supplemental study to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

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